

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1964

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4451

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: VORSTER'S SATV INTERVIEW

REF: (A) PRETORIA 4431; (B) PRETORIA 4433

1. VORSTER'S PURPOSE IN HIS AUGUST 1 SABC-TV INTERVIEW

APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TO ELABORATE FOR THE RECORD HIS INTER-
PRETATION OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL, THE STATE OF PLAY, AND
SOUTH AFRICAN INTENTIONS. HE FOCUSSED ON FIVE ELEMENTS:

A. THE WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION WAS A DOUBLE-CROSS WHICH
HAD TO BE UNEQUIVOCALLY REJECTED.

B. THE NEXT MAJOR HURDLE WILL BE AHTISSARI'S REPORT WHICH THE
SAG WILL MAKE SURE IS IN THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE WESTERN
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PROPOSAL BEFORE AGREEING TO PROCEED WITH IMPLEMENTATION.

C. IT IS THE ROLE OF THE UNSR TO WORK IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH
THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL AND TO SATISFY HIMSELF AS TO THE FAIRNESS
AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE ACTS OF THAT OFFICIAL, WHO WILL BE IN
CHARGE OF THE ELECTIONS AND OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE
TERRITORY UNTIL INDEPENDENCE.

D. IT IS THE OBLIGATION OF THE WESTERN FIVE TO

ASSURE THAT SWAPO HONORS THEIR SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL.

E. IF THE OTHER PARTIES DO NOT MEET THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES, SOUTH AFRICA WILL HONOR ITS COMMITMENT TO MAKE NAMIBIA INDEPENDENT.

2. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT IN SPITE OF HIS CHARGES OF A DOUBLE-CROSS, VORSTER SHIFTED HIS FOCUS AWAY FROM WALVIS BAY TO MATTERS CONCERNED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL.

3. HE REITERATED THE TROUBLESOME ASSERTION BOTHA MADE APRIL 25 UPON SAG ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL (CAPE TOWN 818) THAT SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS WOULD REMAIN IN NAMIBIA AFTER THE ELECTIONS IF REQUESTED TO DO SO. AT THE SAME TIME, WITH A POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT NUANCE OF DIFFERENCE, HE INDICATED THAT THIS MATTER, ALONG WITH THE QUESTIONS OF SAG RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW AND ORDER AND THE COMPOSITION OF UNTAG WOULD HAVE TO BE "CLARIFIED" BETWEEN THE UNSR AND THE AG.

4. A DISTURBING ELEMENT OF VORSTER'S INTERVIEW WAS HIS OMISSION OF A CLAUSE FROM A PASSAGE HE QUOTED FROM THE WESTERN PROPOSAL ON THE UNSR'S ROLE. IN NOTING THE UNSR "WILL HAVE TO SATISFY HIMSELF AT EACH STAGE AS TO THE FAIRNESS AND THE APPROPRIATENESS OF ALL MEASURES AFFECTING THE POLITICAL PROCESS AT ALL LEVELS," VORSTER LEFT OUT THE ESSENTIAL FINAL WORDS "OF ADMINISTRATION BEFORE SUCH MEASURES TAKE EFFECT." (IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT THE SAG EARLIER TOOK EXCEPTION TO A CLAUSE

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OF THIS NATURE. (SEE CAPE TOWN 315.) PRESUMABLY THE OMISSION WAS INTENTIONALLY MADE PERHAPS HAVING ESPECIALLY IN MIND THE AG'S PROCEEDING WITH VOTER REGISTRATION WITHOUT THE UNSR'S PRIOR APPROVAL.

5. IN SPEAKING OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS (PARA 1C ABOVE), VORSTER SAID THOSE POWERS ARE HONOR BOUND TO MAKE NAMIBIA INDEPENDENT BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, STATING THAT IF THEY DID NOT MEET THEIR RESPONSIBILITY THE SAG WOULD GO AHEAD ON ITS OWN. HOWEVER THE WORDING WAS TOO INEXACT TO BE CERTAIN HOW FIRMLY HE MEANS TO HOLD TO A DECEMBER 31, 1978 DEADLINE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WAS SIMPLY REAFFIRMING FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES HIS EARLIER COMMITMENT TO THIS DATE AND THAT HE IS PREPARED TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE ON THE ISSUE LATER ON. ONE HINT AS TO HIS INTENTIONS WAS HIS REMARK TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR DURING THE LATTER'S FAREWELL CALL THAT SWAPO WILL TRY TO GET THE INDEPENDENCE DATE POSTPONED AND THE WEST WILL PROBABLY GIVE IN TO THEM AGAIN.

6. IN PART, VORSTER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE RELATIVE ROLES OF THE AG AND UNSR APPEARS DESIGNED TO COUNTER AND WARN AGAINST THE SWAPO INTERPRETATION OF THIS IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP. HE

UNDOUBTEDLY FEELS IT IMPORTANT TO SHOW HIS OWN PEOPLE THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS STILL "IN CHARGE" OF THE PROCESS AND CAPABLE OF OPTING OUT IF OTHER PARTIES FAIL TO KEEP THEIR COMMITMENTS. THERE IS TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT GENUINE FEAR OF VIOLENCE AND CHAOS BASED ON A TREMENDOUS DISTRUST OF SWAPO AND OF THE WESTERN AND UN ABILITY TO STAND UP TO SWAPO IF THE LATTER CONTINUES TO THREATEN THE USE OF FORCE EVEN CONTRARY TO THE SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL.

7. IN THE ABSENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA AND BRAND FOURIE, I TELEPHONED DFA UNDER SECRETARY VAN DALSEN BOTH TO REGISTER MY CONCERN ABOUT FALSE QUOTATIONS BEING ATTRIBUTED TO DON MCHENRY (REF B) AND TO NOTE THE OMISSION OF SEVERAL IMPORTANT WORDS FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S APPARENT QUOTATION FROM THE SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL. ON
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THE LATTER I SAID THAT WHILE ID DID NOT WISH TO REGISTER ANY VIEW ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERPRETIVE COMMENTS, I FELT THAT IF THE EXACT WORDS OF THE PROPOSAL WERE TO BE CITED IT WOULD BE CONDUCIVE TO BETTER UNDERSTANDING IF SUCH CITATIONS WERE TO BE AS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE AS POSSIBLE. VAN DALSEN SAID HE WOULD REPORT MY VIEW, WHICH I IN TURN REPORTED TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PRETORIA FIVE.
EDMONDSON

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